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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/635,897	08/07/2003	Brett A. Latimer	46555-026	7811

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EXAMINER

LEV, BRUCE ALLEN

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3634

DATE MAILED: 03/22/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/635,897

Applicant(s)

LATIMER ET AL.

Examiner

Bruce A. Lev

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 January 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-49 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 8-12, 15-19 and 21 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7, 13, 14, 20 and 22-49 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12/30/05.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

BRUCE A. LEV
PRIMARY EXAMINER

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

Claims 1-7, 13, 14, 22-30, 35, 37-41, and 47-49 are rejected under 35

U.S.C. ***102(b)*** as being anticipated by ***Alim 6,347,687***.

Alim sets forth a folding ladder comprising an upper ladder section comprising left and right ladder rails; a lower ladder section comprising left and right ladder rails; a lockable resistance hinge 17 rotatably connecting the upper and lower ladder rails; a plurality of steps (44 and 96) rotatably disposed between the ladder rails between retracted and deployed positions; left and right step rails (88 and 92) joining front portions of the steps and rotatably connected by a joint; and wherein the ladder being formed from one of metal, resin, and composite material.

Claims 22-49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. ***102(b)*** as being anticipated by ***McAllister et al 4,750,587***.

McAllister et al set forth a folding ladder comprising an upper ladder section comprising left and right ladder rails; a lower ladder section comprising left and right ladder rails; a plurality of steps (36 and 38) "rotatably" disposed between the ladder rails between retracted and deployed positions; the lower rails configured to slide within tracks of the upper rails; an additional section (viewed as the foot portions) configured to translate and rotate with respect to the lower ladder section; wherein the ladder being formed from one of metal, resin, and composite material; and brackets for attaching to an associated opening.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claims 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. ***103(a)*** as being unpatentable over ***Alim in view of McAllister et al***

Alim sets forth the ladder, as advanced above, except for a pivoting foot upon the end of a rail of the folding ladder apparatus. However, ***McAllister et al teach*** the use of a pivoting feet upon the end of the rails of the folding ladder apparatus. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the ladder of Alim by incorporating a pivoting foot upon the folding ladder, as taught by McAllister et al, in order to provide increased friction and traction upon uneven or slanted surfaces.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 8-12, 15-19, and 21 are allowable over the prior art of record.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

As concerns claims 8 and 15, structural limitations pertaining to the ***slotted link member*** being secured to the ***pin***, wherein the link member is rotatable and translatable about the pin, along with the other structural limitations are neither taught nor suggested by the prior art of record.

As concerns claim 21, structural limitations pertaining to the ***foot*** translating along a ***track*** provided along the inside of the ladder rail, along with the other structural limitations are neither taught nor suggested by the prior art of record.

Response to Amendment

Applicant's remarks filed January 19, 2005 have been fully considered but they are not deemed to be persuasive.

As concerns remarks pertaining to the ***preamble*** and the ***intended use*** of an apparatus, the examiner reiterates the position that the intended use of an apparatus is **NOT given patentable weight** within an "apparatus" claim. Further, the "for use" language including "configured *for* installation in an opening" can be applied also to the references set forth, i.e., the ends of the upper rails (of both references set forth) have surfaces that *can be* attached to connector members that *can be* used *for* installation in an opening.

As concerns remarks pertaining to the structure of Alim, the examiner reiterates the position that Alim clearly sets forth upper and lower rail sections pivoted to one another and including pivoting steps that rotate when the rail sections are rotated between retracted and deployed positions. Further, in a retracted position, the steps are clearly placed in a position that do not extend past a plane defined by the edges of the ladder rails (as illustrated in Figure 7).

As for the new limitations within claims 47-49, including "a volume defined by the space bounded by the left ladder rail and the right ladder rail", the examiner points out that the left ladder rail and the right ladder rail do NOT actually define a definite "volume". Therefore, the "volume" can be viewed as most any volume of area anywhere near the ladder section, including the volume between the left ladder rail and the right ladder rail. Even further, the applicant has not set forth engineering reasons as

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to why these limitations are necessary or advantageous. As such, these limitations can also be considered as a design choice or as a simple function without the appropriate means being set forth prior.

As per claim 3, the examiner takes the position that friction between members of the hinge act to increase resistance to opening and closing along the arc of deployment of the rail sections.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Bruce A. Lev whose telephone number is (703) 308-7470.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-2168.

March 11, 2005

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B. Lev', with a large loop at the start and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Bruce A. Lev

Primary Examiner

Group 3600